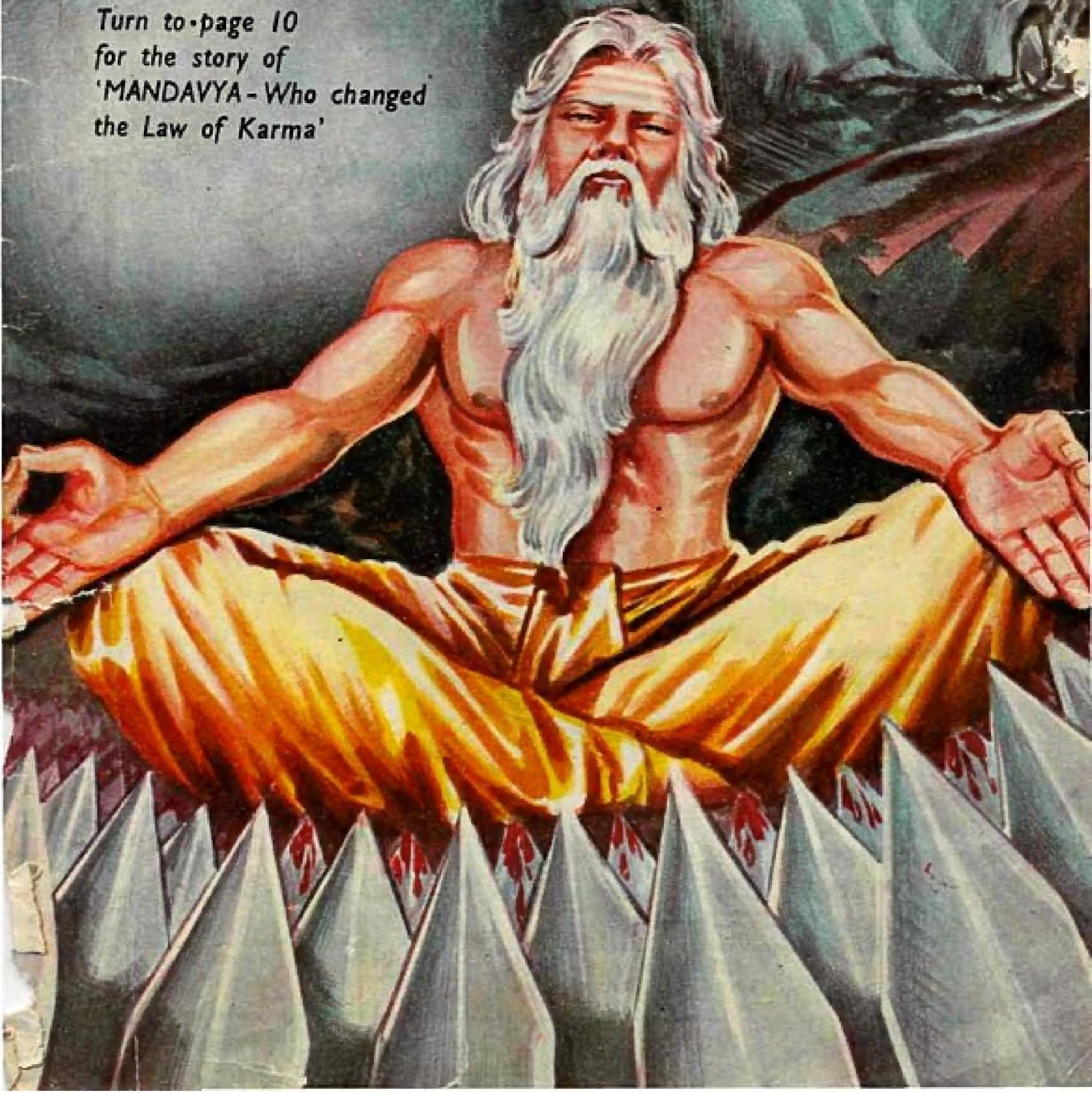


CHANDAMAMA

OCTOBER 1976

ONE RUPEE

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'MANDAVYA - Who changed
the Law of Karma'





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Only students upto the age of 12 years can participate. Colour the above picture in any of the 'Camel' colours. Send in your coloured entries at the following address.

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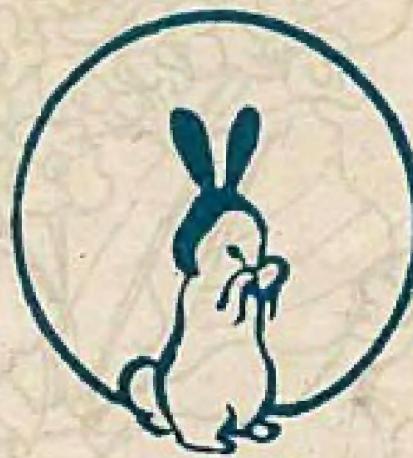
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CHANDAMAMA
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To our Esteemed Readers

We are ever grateful to several lakhs of our young readers. CHANDAMAMA always strived to serve them with a bright reading fair within a modest selling price of Re. 1/- a copy. For sometime past material costs have gone so high that we have no other alternative except to reluctantly revise the price.

NOVEMBER 76 onwards CHANDAMAMA will cost Rs. 1-25

This enhanced price besides gives a few more pages of fine reading. We are sure our young reader friends would continue their patronage as usual.

—PUBLISHERS



CHANDAMAMA

Vol. 7

OCTOBER 1976

No. 4

Founder: CHAKRAPANI

THE UNCLE MOON

Representatives of 37 countries sat in a conference at Geneva discussing the future of the moon! Since the moon has already proved to be within the man's reach, they thought it was time to decide who should own this sweet satellite of the earth. Luckily, they have failed to come to a decision.

We hope, when they meet again, they would invite India to put forth her claim to the moon. In no other culture does moon occupy so important a place as it does in the culture of India. Not only would some of our ancient dynasties trace their origin to the moon, but also *Chandra* or *Chand* (the moon) happens to be a most popular middle word for numerous Indian names. Several of our sacred days are inseparably associated with the waxing and waning of the moon.

While the folklores of some countries describe the moon as a queer creature, in one of Aesop's shorter fables we see the moon depicted as a little girl desiring to have a frock. (Her mother says, "Who can make a frock for you, my child, since your measurements are never the same?") But Indians are the only people who look upon the moon as a loving maternal uncle, *Chandamama*. Some people might go to the moon now, but the uncle has been visiting us since time immemorial, often we fail to recognise him though!

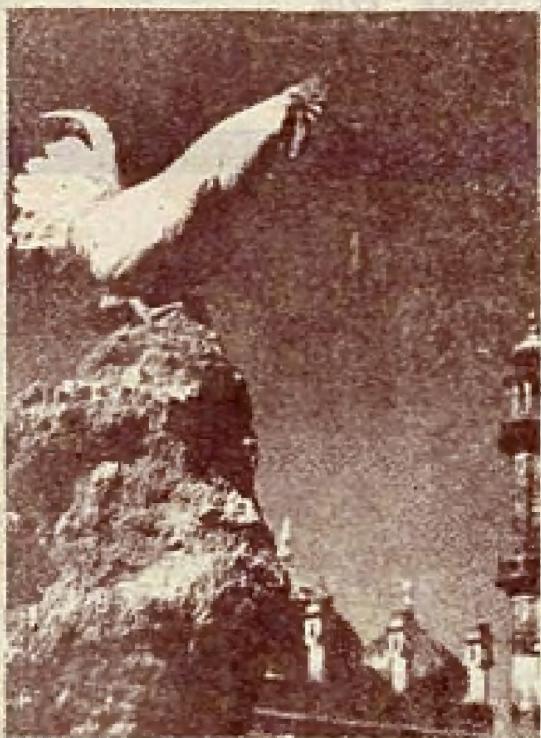
This issue contains an account of one such visit of the uncle—the story behind the symbol of your magazine.

IN THIS ISSUE

- * TWO SIGNIFICANT LEGENDS OF ANCIENT INDIA
- * A HISTORICAL STORY THROUGH PICTURES
- * THE VAMPIRE'S RIDDLE AND A MAGIC THROUGH A STORY
- * A PANCHATANTRA STORY AND THE STORY OF A PHRASE

PLUS 6 COMPLETE STORIES
AND OTHER REGULAR FEATURES

PHOTO CAPTION CONTEST



Mr. A. L. Syed



Mr. Azmat A. Syed

- These two photographs are somewhat related. Can you think of suitable captions ? Could be single words, or several words, but the two captions must be related to each other.
- Rs. 20 will be awarded as prize for the best caption. Remember, your entry must reach us by 31st OCTOBER .
- Winning captions will be announced in DECEMBER Issue.
- Write your entry on a POST CARD, specify the month, give your full name address, age and post to : PHOTO CAPTION CONTEST, CHANDAMAMA MAGAZINE, MADRAS - 600 026.

Result of Photo Caption Contest held in August Issue

The prize is awarded to Mr. S. V. Nayak,

New B. H. Road, V Cross, Sagar 577401, Shimoga.

Winning Entry - 'Great is His Fame' - 'Might is His Frame'

NEWS FOR YOU...

Record and Record

Have you ever heard of a noise record? But do not get frightened. The one who has set the record is a singer. She is Graciet Hall of England. She emitted a yell of 108.7 decibels. (Decibel is the tenth part of a bel. And a bel is a measure for intensity of noises, electric currents, etc.)

Andy Hupel (26) of America has set a new world record by playing table tennis for 81 hours, with only five minutes of intervals at the end of every hour for taking food and drink. 80 balls and 28 partners were required to carry him on.

The Two-headed Turtle

Years ago an African zoo had a two-headed snake and the heads fought with each other when food was served to them. This time it is a turtle fighting with itself! A Dushanbe, Tajikistan, a turtle has been found with two heads and six legs—a rare freak of Nature.

The Champion Bird-Watcher

More and more Americans are enjoying bird-watching as a hobby. Foremost among them is Joseph William Taylor who, during 50 years, has spotted all the species of birds in his country excepting one.

...AND SOME VIEWS TOO

A Guide to 20th Century Thoughts on Individuality.

While it is true that an inherently free and scrupulous person may be destroyed, such an individual can never be enslaved or used as a blind tool.

—Albert Einstein

To be nobody-but-myself—in a world which is doing its best, night and day, to make you everybody else—means to fight the hardest battle which any human being can fight, and never stop fighting.

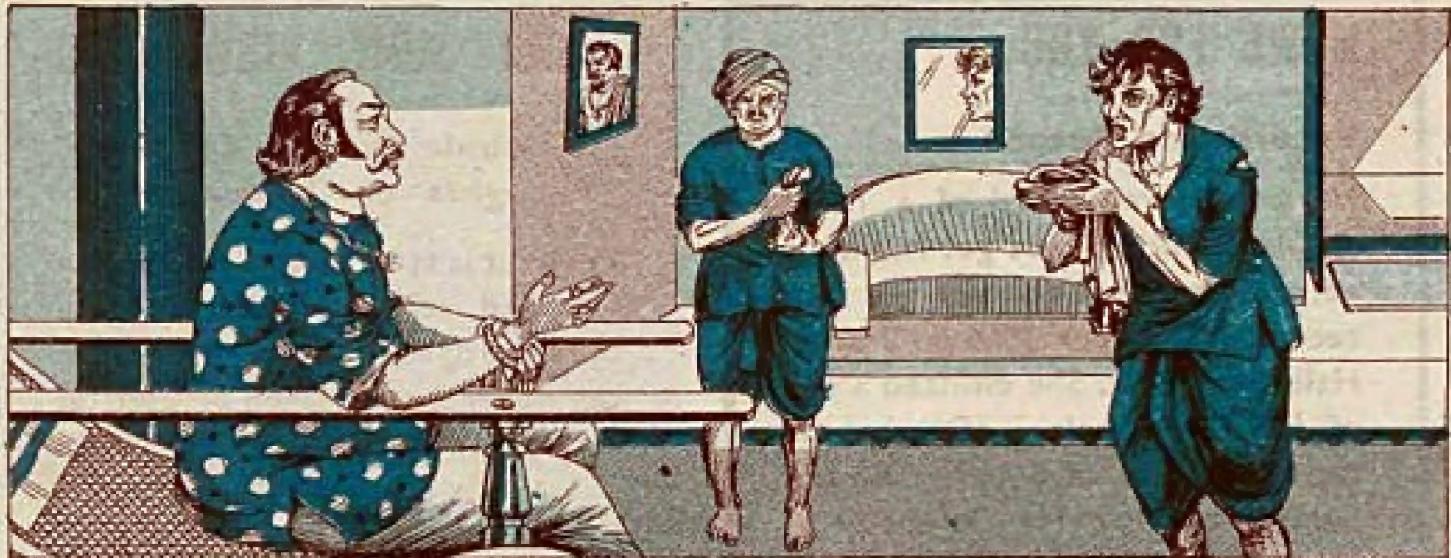
—E. E. Cummings

When we lose our individual independence in the corporate-ness of a mass movement, we find a new freedom—freedom to hate, bully, lie, torture, murder, and betray without shame and remorse. Herein undoubtedly lies part of the attractiveness of a mass movement.

—Eric Hoffer

A good deal of confusion could be avoided, if we refrained from setting before the group, what can be the aim only of the individual; and before society as a whole, what can be the aim only of a group.

—T. S. Eliot



SUVARNA WINS A JOB

Suvarna was a clever young man who lived in a village miles away from the city of Vijaynagar.

One day, while roaming about in the local market, he heard a herald making an announcement with the beats of a drum. The announcement said that a certain landlord of Vijaynagar wanted to employ a number of servants for taking care of his cattle. Those who desired to get the employment should meet the landlord after two days.

Suvarna, who had never visited Vijaynagar, thought that it was a nice chance for him to see the city, even if he did not get the job. He proceeded to Vijaynagar the next day and

spent his night at an inn on the city's outskirts.

In the morning he went to meet the landlord. He was amazed to see that more than a hundred candidates had assembled there. The landlord, of course, owned several hundred heads of cattle and he was prepared to employ as many as fifty servants. He was a kind man and after he had selected his fifty men, he paid a packet containing ten rupees to each one of the rest as their travelling allowances.

Suvarna was among those who did not get the job but got the travelling allowance. He was quite happy. He spent the day seeing places and monu-

ments and at night returned to the inn. He planned to pass the night there and to begin his journey towards his village in the morning.

At night he heard another lodger who too had come to the city in order to meet the landlord, exclaiming to his companion, "Good luck! My packet contains twenty rupees instead of ten. I can buy a lot of things with the extra money!" His companion congratulated him.

In the morning Suvarna did not start for his village. Instead, he went to the landlord's house and waited patiently till the landlord came out to meet his visitors. Suvarna bowed to him and showing him the ten rupees he had received the previous day, said, "O benevolent Sir! So far as I know, the packets you distributed yester-

day were meant to contain ten rupees each. But I saw that my packet contained twenty rupees. I have come to return the surplus ten rupees, which, I believe, was put in my packet by mistake!"

The landlord knew that an extra amount of ten rupees had been put in one of the packets by mistake. But he never dreamed that the person to whose lot it had fallen would come to return it. He was deeply impressed by what he thought to be sheer honesty of Suvarna. He offered him a better job in his household, at a pay higher than what was given to those employed the previous day.

Although Suvarna won the job by his cleverness, he proved himself honest and efficient and prospered much in future.



MANDAVYA-Who Changed the Law of Karma

At midnight the watchmen of the king's palace came to know that there had been a burglary in the palace itself. Immediately they alerted the guards. The guards set out to catch the burglars. The king who woke up and learnt of the burglary said that if the guards failed to produce the thieves before him by morning, they themselves will be punished.

The guards spread out all over the town and searched for the burglars at every possible hiding place. At last some of them came to a suburban hamlet and entered a small hut. To their joy, they found the stolen articles lying inside the hut, behind an old man who sat still with his eyes closed.

The guards shouted at the man and asked him who had deposited the articles there. But the man made no answer.

No much time was left for the dawn. The guards were anxious to produce the culprit before the king. So they dragged the man, who did not seem to understand anything, to

the court. They told the king, "Although we have not been able to catch the thieves, we have recovered the stolen goods. We have also captured the man who had received the goods from the thieves. Here is he."

The impatient king ordered the man to be put to death immediately.

The guards led their prisoner to a ground outside the town. In those days a person condemned to death was placed on the point of a spear which stood on the ground. The spear would gradually pierce across the person's body and kill him before long. The same process was followed for the present prisoner.

But the prisoner was a sage, Mandavya by name.

Needless to say, Mandavya was aware neither of the burglary nor of the burglars depositing the stolen goods in his hut. He was engrossed in meditation.

The guards left the ground after placing Mandavya on the spear. They returned several hours later to bury their victim's

deadbody. But to their surprise they found him still alive. They went back and came there again in the evening. The situation had not changed even then. And to their utter bewilderment, it did not change the next day or during the day that followed.

When the king heard of this strange phenomenon, he had no doubt left in his mind that the person on the spear was no ordinary man. He ran to the ground and released Mandavya from the spear. Then, falling at Mandavya's feet, the king begged for his pardon.

Wonderfully kind, indeed,

was the sage Mandavya. He bore no grudge against the king. He smiled and left the place.

He wandered from one holy place to another, but could not free his mind from a question: he had committed no sin; why then did he suffer the pains of the spear?

At last Mandavya met Yama, the God of Death and the guardian of the laws that governed human destiny. He put the question to the god. Yama answered that he had to suffer the spear because in his childhood he had pierced a needle across an insect's body.



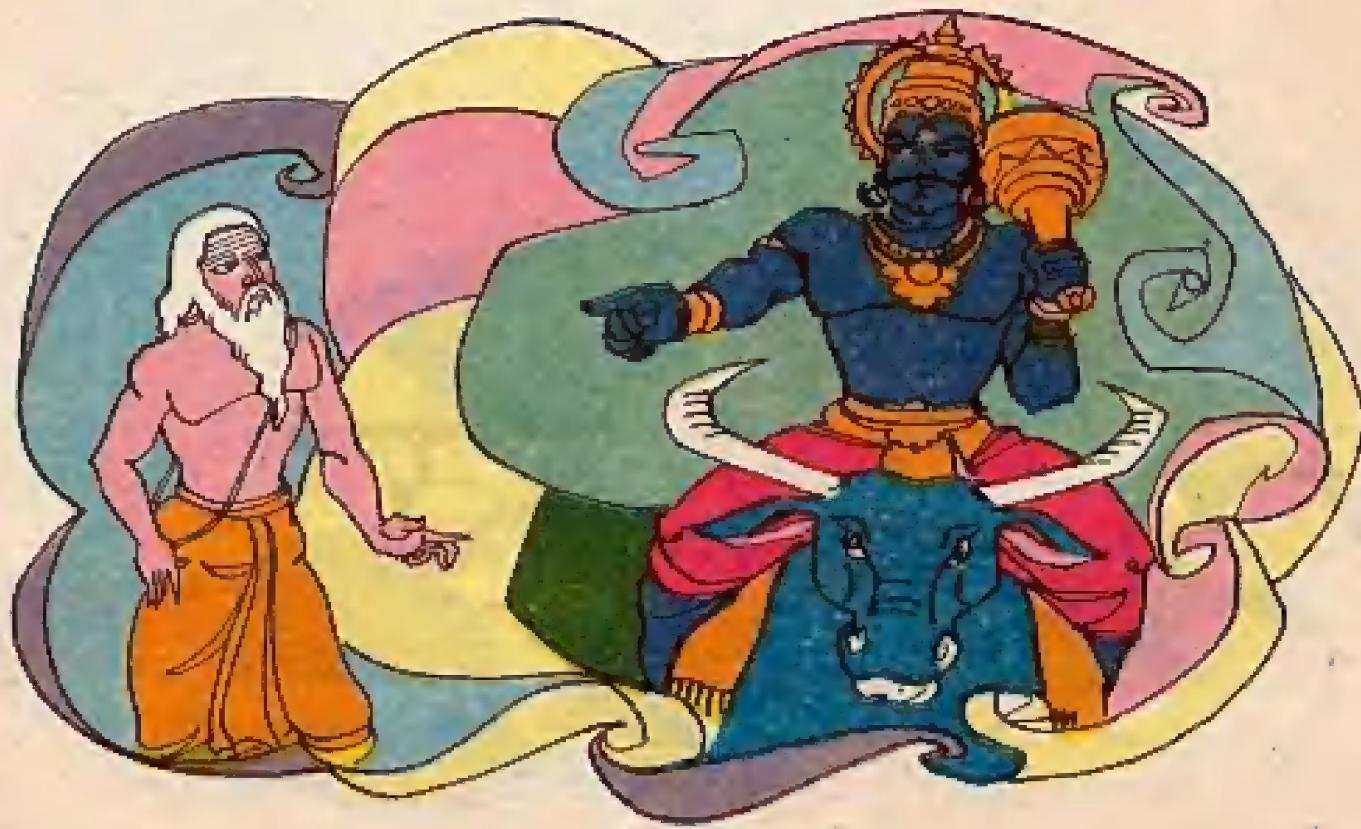
Far from satisfying Mandavya, Yama's answer made him even more thoughtful and pensive. Should he have been punished for an action which he had performed when he had no power to differentiate between good and evil? It was not cruelty that had made him torture the insect, but a child's search for fun! Must the consequence of that action be so terrible?

To Mandavya, such a law of *Karma* seemed unjust and arbitrary. He gathered up his yogic power and, invoking the Divine, said that thenceforth one must not be subjected to sufferings on account of follies done in

innocence as a child. A human being below fourteen years of age should not be deemed as fully conscious of his doings.

Mandavya's wish, uttered with the force of sincerity, modified the law accordingly, says the *Mahabharata*.

The story of Mandavya emphasises the fact that long before the laws change in the physical world, they change at another level, where man's destiny is made. Great souls like Mandavya, with their profound sense of justice, bring about such changes. It takes a long time for such changes to manifest in our human world thereafter.





New Tales of King Vikram
and the Vampire

THE PRINCESS AND THE BANDIT

Dark was the night and sharp was the breeze. But King Vikram did not give up his mission. Disregarding the weird laughter of the ghosts whose fearful faces flashed in the intermittent lightning, he went back to the huge tree and climbed it and brought down the corpse.

As he began crossing the cremation ground with the corpse on his shoulder, the vampire which had possessed the corpse spoke out, "O King! I do not know about the circumstance in which you agreed to take up such a task. At times one is obliged to do a certain thing even if one did not approve of it. To illustrate my point, I am going to narrate to you the story of King Subirsen.



Listen with attention, O King, for that would lighten the rigours of your work."

Thereafter the vampire went on telling the story:

Long ago, King Subirsen ruled over Chandrapur. He was a great king and his treasury abounded in wealth. But it so happened that bags of coins, silver, gold and other precious things were observed missing from the treasury from time to time. The treasury was situated right inside the palace. It was locked and while one of its keys remained with the king, the other one remained with the queen. The palace was guarded

by ferocious dogs and alert guards. How could the wealth be stolen?

In his agony, one day the king said in his court, "I will be willing to give the princess away in marriage to the person who can solve the mystery of this strange theft!"

The very next day a charming young man appeared in the court and told the king, "My lord! I believe I can help you solve the mystery."

"Very well, young man, how many soldiers do you need to go and capture the thief or the thieves?" asked the king.

"I do not want soldiers. I want you to accompany me to a certain place. I urge upon you to have trust in me and do as I say," answered the young man.

Subirsen was a brave king. He agreed to do as requested and wanted to know when the young man would like him to go out. The young man promised to return after two days to guide the king to the place he had in his mind.

The young man duly met the king after two days. It was evening. He told the king confidentially, "Tonight we go to find out the thieves."

The king dressed himself like

a common traveller. The young man guided him into a forest. They climbed a hillock and sat behind a rock.

"My lord! The road you see below leads to a cave which is the meeting place of a gang of bandits. We may see them soon. But what I desire to show you is not just the gang but something far more intriguing than that."

Soon they could see some light at a distance. The light became brighter and they saw two bandits with burning torches coming that way. The bandits walked flanking a

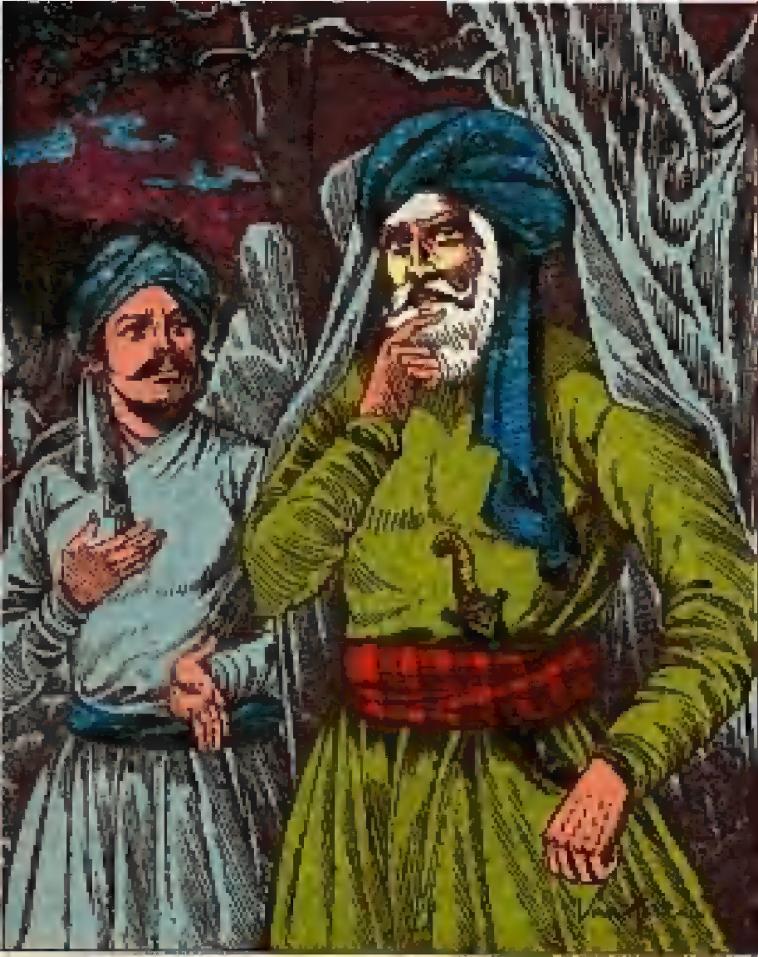
beautiful damsel. As they came closer, the king gave out a faint cry of shock. The young man instantly clamped his hand on the king's mouth.

Behind the damsel and her guards walked two fellows carrying two bags. They soon disappeared amidst the rocks. The bags clearly showed the marks of the royal treasury.

"What do you make out from what you saw just now, O King?" asked the young man in a subdued tone.

"Tell me, my young friend, how did you know that we were going to witness such a





scene tonight?" asked the king in his turn.

Answered the young man, "Being an orphan, I used to wander in this forest since my childhood. I have never known what is fear. A month ago I passed my night here just for sake of a change. At midnight I saw this young lady coming here with her escorts. She was followed by two fellows carrying huge bags. I had heard from some hillmen that this place was the haunt of bandits. Later, when I heard that treasures were missing from the palace, I suspected that the bags I saw the bandits carrying

must be the loots from the palace. I somehow felt that they would repeat the performance tonight, for, exactly a month had passed since I saw them and the full dark night had come again."

"Young man! Can you guess who the young lady was?" asked the king.

"From her gait and dress I guess she must be from a highly aristocratic family," replied the young man.

"She is my daughter, the princess!" said the king.

"Is that true, my lord? I could not have believed that if I had heard that from someone else," said the young man with horror, and he added, "In that case, my lord, I am sorry to have brought you here. I should not have involved myself in such a matter!"

"Do not worry. But I must punish the princess tomorrow, in the court. I invite you to be present there and witness the trial," said the king.

The king reached his palace an hour after midnight. He entered the apartment of the princess and demanded of her maids, "Where is the princess?" The panick-stricken maids did not speak. The king did not

leave the apartment until, a little before dawn, the princess returned.

"Where did you pass your night, my daughter?" questioned the king gravely. The princess lowered her head and kept mum.

Next day, in the court, the king announced, "My daughter is guilty of the crime of stealing from the royal treasury. She must be punished. I order her to..."

At once the young man stood up and said, "My lord! Before you pronounce your order, I beg to remind you of one thing.

You were once willing to give her away in marriage to anybody who could solve the mystery of the theft. I resolved the mystery for you. Be pleased to give her in marriage to me. That should be punishment enough for her. That would also mean keeping your own word!"

The king accepted the young man's proposal without hesitation.

The vampire stopped here and after a pause, it suddenly asked King Vikram, "Tell me, O King, why did King Subirsten accept the young man's



proposal instantly? Why had he asked the young man to be present in the court? If you know the answers, but choose to keep quiet, your head would get shattered!"

Replied King Vikram: "The young man's conduct was shrouded in mystery from the beginning. If he intended to capture the bandits, he could very well have led the king's soldiers into the forest. Instead, what he showed to the king seems to be a well-rehearsed scene in a drama. As if it was to show the face of the princess clearly that the two guards who flanked her kept their torches high!

"The clever king could guess that the young man himself was the leader of the gang and that the princess was in love with him. He was not happy about

it. But as a wise father he thought it proper to give the princess in marriage to the man she loved. The king understood that the young man had planned the drama because he had no courage to put forth his proposal in a normal way. The king wanted the young man to be present in the court because that would make the situation easy. The princess would be spared of punishment and the king would find an argument for marrying her to the young man."

As soon as King Vikram finished giving the answer, the vampire, along with the corpse, gave him the slip.

The king sighed. But he turned back to approach the tree again, although the wild winds shrieked and a storm seemed imminent.



THE SUSPENDED REWARD

Yasodharma, the young prince of Mandsur, was out for hunting with his friends and bodyguards. Merrily they galloped into a forest.



The prince saw a charming deer. He at once got down from his horse and gave the deer a chase. But the deer was as swift as lightning. The prince, separated from his companion, pursued it for a long time.



He was tired and thirsty. After wandering alone for a long time, he was delighted at coming across a stream with crystal-clear water.



The prince plunged into the stream to cool and refresh his tired limbs. Little did he know how strong was the current. He was soon carried downstream. When all seemed lost for him, he was rescued by a young girl who threw a strong creeper at him and dragged him ashore.

The grateful prince learnt that her saviour was the daughter of a Brahmin. The prince offered her several rewards. But she would have none. At last she said, "If ever I need a reward, I will send you a message. Let your promised reward remain suspended."



Years passed. Prince Yasdharma became the king. For his bravery and uprightness he earned the respect of his fellow kings.

The Brahmin's daughter was married to the priest of a famous temple of Mathura.

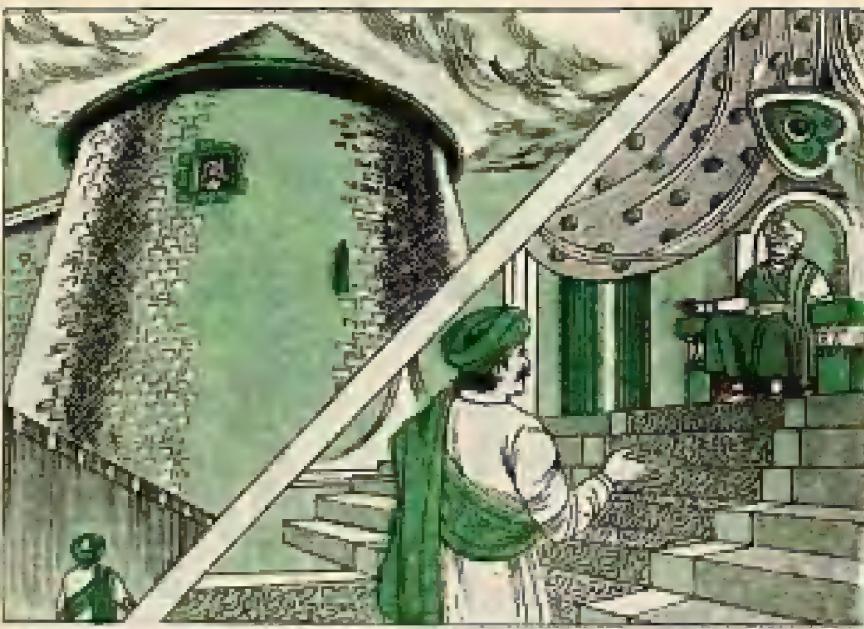
Huns, the savage nomads from Central Asia, were then frequently invading parts of India. Their leader, Mihirgoola, had settled at Malwa. From time to time he went out to burn down towns and massacre innocent people.



At Mathura, they ransacked a temple. It was in this temple that the priest who had married Yaso-dharma's saviour worked. The priest was taken prisoner. When his wife and his young daughter came to plead for his release, they too were captured.

The priest's daughter was extremely beautiful. The Hun leader proposed to release the couple if they would agree to marry their daughter to him.





The couple and their daughter did not agree to the proposal. They were imprisoned in a house on a hill. Through the window, the lady persuaded a servant to go to King Yasodharma and ask him for the reward due to her—which was to fight the Huns.



But he did not wait to receive ovations from the people. He rushed to Mathura to rescue the woman who had once saved him. He had been a bit late. The woman had died in the prison. The king wept, but he had the consolation that he had given his promised reward to her by driving away the Huns.

A ROYAL SECRET

There was a king who would have very much loved to sport a pair of moustache, but hair just would not grow on his upper lip! He had to remain satisfied with a pair of false moustache.

The king's secret was known only to his barber. The king had warned him that if he ever told anybody what His Majesty did not have, he would be punished with death. The barber had promised never to give away the royal secret.

Once a famous painter visited the court. The king commissioned him to draw a portrait of his. The king would sit before him for an hour or two everyday and he would work on his canvas. After four days the painter said, "Your Highness, the portrait is complete!"

The king was shocked, looking at the portrait. The painter had omitted to draw his moustache! The king concluded that the painter had somehow come to know his sad secret.

"I had promised to give you a thousand rupees. But I am pleased to give you two thousand. Do not give away my secret, well?" the king implored the painter. The happy painter hardly heard the last part of the king's statement. He left the palace immediately.

The angry king sent his bodyguard to the barber. The bodyguard arrested the barber for having given away the royal secret. Before leaving his house, the barber scolded his wife for having told others what he had confided to her. The wife gave a slap to her son suspecting him to have done the mischief, for she had disclosed the secret to him alone!

In the meanwhile the artist came running to the king and said, "My lord! Absent-minded fellow that I am, I forgot to draw the moustache in your portrait. Let me do it now!"

The barber was honourably acquitted. The king sighed with relief.





LEGENDS OF INDIA

THE RABBIT IN THE MOON

A poor man walked along a street in a town. The residents of the street were all rich. They passed by him in their glittering garbs, casting contemptuous looks at him.

The poor man expected that the people would take pity on him; some one would offer him a piece of garment seeing the tattered robe he wore and some one would offer him food. But, although he walked across the long street and hundreds saw him, nobody seemed to bother about his needs.

At last the poor man opened his lips and begged of people to give him alms. But nobody cared for his pleadings.

Tired and disappointed, the poor man went out of the town and sat down under a roadside

tree. A traveller, whose condition did not seem to be better than his, saw him while coming from the opposite direction.

"Where are you going?" asked the traveller.

"I don't know. I am hungry. I hoped that the people of the town would come forward to offer me food when they saw my condition. But none did so even when I prayed for their help," replied the poor man.

"I see that you are quite inexperienced about the go of the world. Take it from me that even animals are more kind-hearted than men," observed the traveller.

"Are you true?" queried the poor man.

"I am. At least I know of three animals—a monkey, a fox

and a rabbit—the like of which you will never see among men. They would be extremely kind to you if you pay a visit to the hillock inside the forest where they live. I am beholden to them for their hospitality," said the traveller.

The poor man, with a great curiosity, proceeded towards the forest. Soon he came near the hillock, by then feeling quite exhausted. The monkey who sat on a tree at the foot of the hillock, hopped down to a lower branch and asked him what was his purpose in coming there. The man said that he had heard much praise of three animals, a monkey, a fox and a rabbit, and had

come to meet them.

The monkey immediately called his two friends, the fox and the rabbit. All the three stood before the man and greeted him courteously.

"You look tired and hungry. Go and bathe in the spring yonder. That will restore your strength. In the meanwhile we will collect some fruits for you," said the monkey.

By the time the man had finished his bath, the monkey had gathered a number of delicious fruits. The fox had brought a ripe water-melon, dragging it by its creeper.

The monkey then prepared a pile of dry leaves and sticks.



The fox fetched, from the nearby cremation ground, a chip of wood one end of which had caught fire. They placed the wood on the pile and it began burning. They asked their guest to warm himself up.

The guest was immensely pleased. But looking at the rabbit, he asked, "Hello, friend, should you not also do something for me?"

"I want to. But weak and delicate a creature that I am, I wonder if I can bring anything for you from a distance. But wait," said the rabbit and after a moment's reflection, he said again, addressing his two friends, "Please see that our guest is properly entertained to my roasted flesh."

Before the monkey and the fox knew what their friend meant to do, the rabbit had

jumped into the fire. Stunned, all stood silent for a moment.

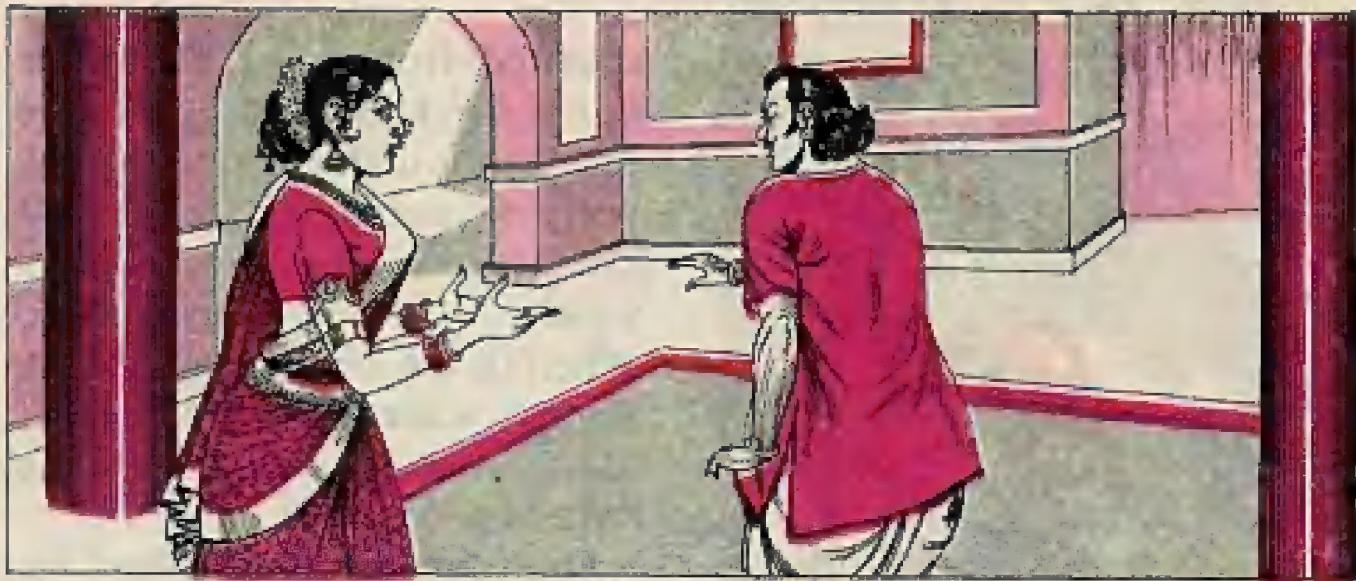
But the guest soon recovered his wits and picked up the rabbit from the fire. He pressed the tiny creature to his breast, tears drizzling in his eyes.

To the utmost surprise of the monkey and the fox, the guest made an ascent up the sky, the rabbit still held on to his breast.

It was evening and a bright moon had just arisen in the eastern sky. As the man rose high, his poor features turned luminous. Soon he merged in the moon. He was, in fact, the moon god who had come on a visit to the earth, in the guise of a poor man.

On the golden orb of the moon the rabbit dwells still. It is his generosity that won him immortality and such a blissful place high up in the sky.





THE PATH TO PROSPERITY

The king of Avanti, Bhaskarsen, had an able officer named Suman. It was Suman's duty to look into the needs of the various departments of the king's government. He was to see if a department would need more hands and if an officer was required to be transferred from one department to another. Suman's honesty and efficiency contributed greatly to the smooth running of the administration.

Suman's wife, Suchitra, knew that her husband occupied an important post. But she was not happy with the salary he received. She would like him to earn more, so that they could build a bigger house and live luxuriously.

"Why don't you try to earn

more?" Suchitra one day asked her husband.

"Why should I? As long as we have a house to live in and enough food to eat, why should I bother about more income?" asked Suman in return.

Suchitra kept quiet. But a few days later she scolded her husband, saying, "Officers who were employed in the king's service years after you, have prospered like laying their hands on gold-mines. But you work almost round the clock and remain satisfied with the same salary which you used to get ten years ago."

Suman grew thoughtful. He asked, "But how did they prosper so quickly?"



"The secret is obvious!" replied Suchitra, "They please the king by praising him: from time to time they present him with such things which they know he likes. The king gives them heavy rewards. That is how they prosper!"

Suman left his home in a pensive mood. He could not concentrate on his work at the office. His wife's observations had left a deep impression on his mind. Indeed, why should he work so hard, so sincerely, and yet get less than others who worked so little?

He kept an eye on people who visited the king and cleverly

inquired from them about the things the king liked. Soon he too was found paying frequent visits to the king, seeking his instructions even in matters which were not important. When in the king's presence, he always waited for an opportunity when he could utter some flattering words.

One day the king called his old minister into his private chamber and told him, "It is time we transferred Suman to some less important post. Who do you think can take over Suman's present responsibilities?"

Surprised, the minister asked, "But Suman is one of our ablest officers. Why should he be deprived of his present post?"

"Suman was very able, no doubt, but he has changed. Before hand he used to meet me only to inform me of the decisions taken and works done. Now he needs a solution from me even for the smallest problem. While previously he pleased me with his works, now he tries to please me by gifts and sweet words. This shows that he has lost confidence in his own capacity for work. Besides, he loiters about and whiles away time waiting for a chance



to meet me. This means he is giving less attention to his works," said the king.

"My lord, let me speak to him once before you take a decision about changing his work," the minister proposed. The king gladly agreed to this.

The minister met Suman privately and told him what the king thought about him. Suman blushed and confessed that he was neglecting his work while gearing up his efforts at pleasing the king. He reported all that had passed between himself and his wife.

The minister duly informed

the king what he learnt from Suman. The king sat silent for a long time and then said, "My wise minister! It is nice you talked to him. He is not to blame. Because he was well-known for his devotion to work, his negligence of his work immediately became obvious. But others who neglect their duties from the beginning do not draw our attention to their poor performance."

The king ordered for a nice mansion to be built for Suman. Thenceforth he never encouraged people to come to him with gifts and flattering words!

"Who is imbecile? Stand up!" said the teacher
The whole class stood up without a murmur

And they smartly declared,

"We know not the meaning of the word,
But it must be glorious, for you are keeping on standing, sir!"

—MANOJ DAS



FRANKENSTEIN

"The modern methods of warfare, like Frankenstein, might destroy their own makers," was a comment made by an author recently.

As the sentence would suggest, Frankenstein means something which harms its own creator. The phrase is often used in this sense today.

But Mary Shelley (sister of poet P. B. Shelley) from whose fiction, *Frankenstein*, the word got the lift into the world of phrases and proverbs, did not intend it to mean so.

This is the brief outline of her fiction: Frankenstein, a student of physiology, constructed a monster out of corpses collected from various graveyards. He succeeded in giving it life through a process of galvanism.

But the creature had no soul. After a while it felt lonely and

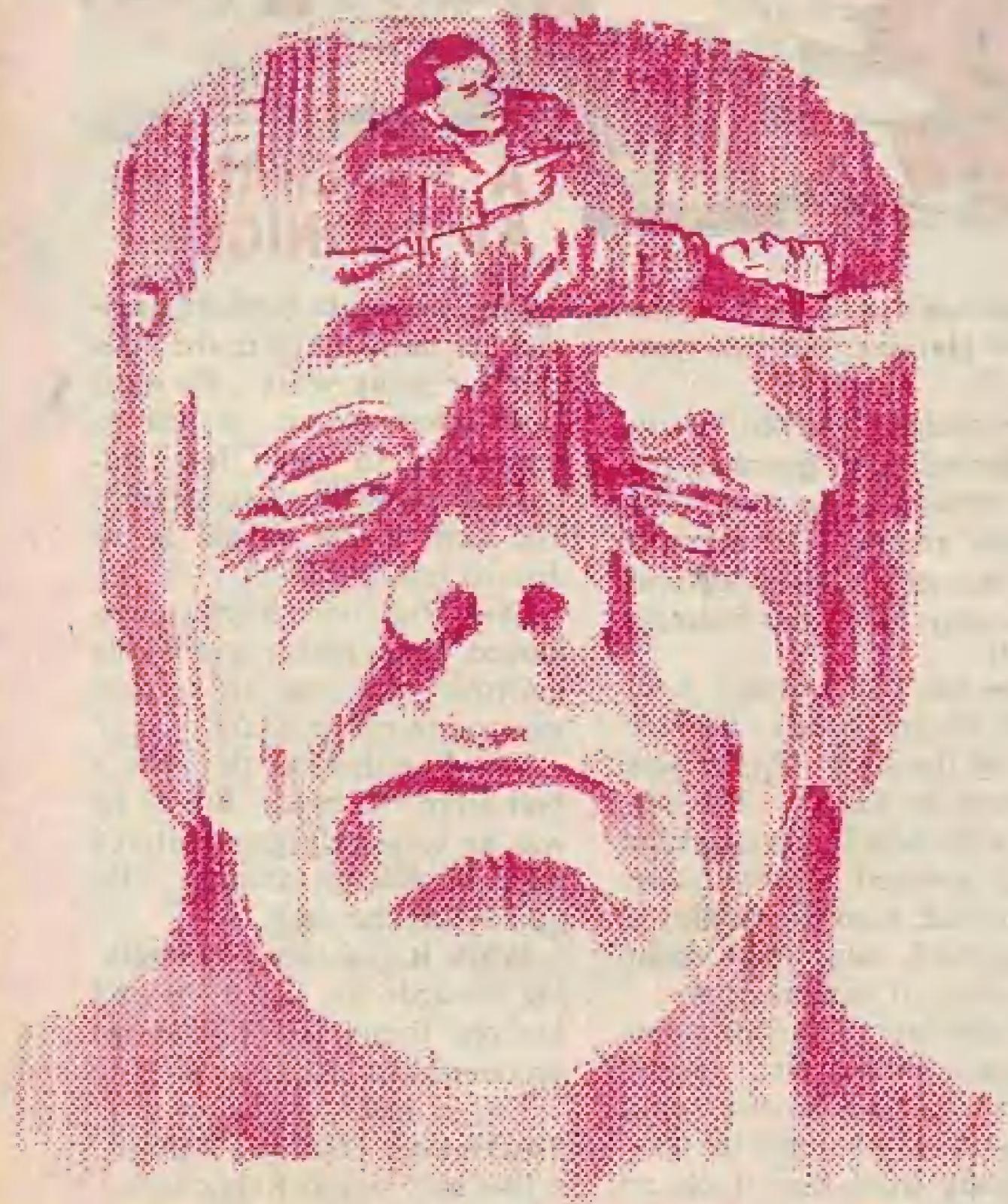
craved sympathy. But everyone shunned it. Frustrated, the monster wrecked its vengeance on its creator's brother and his bride and then escaped to the Arctic region.

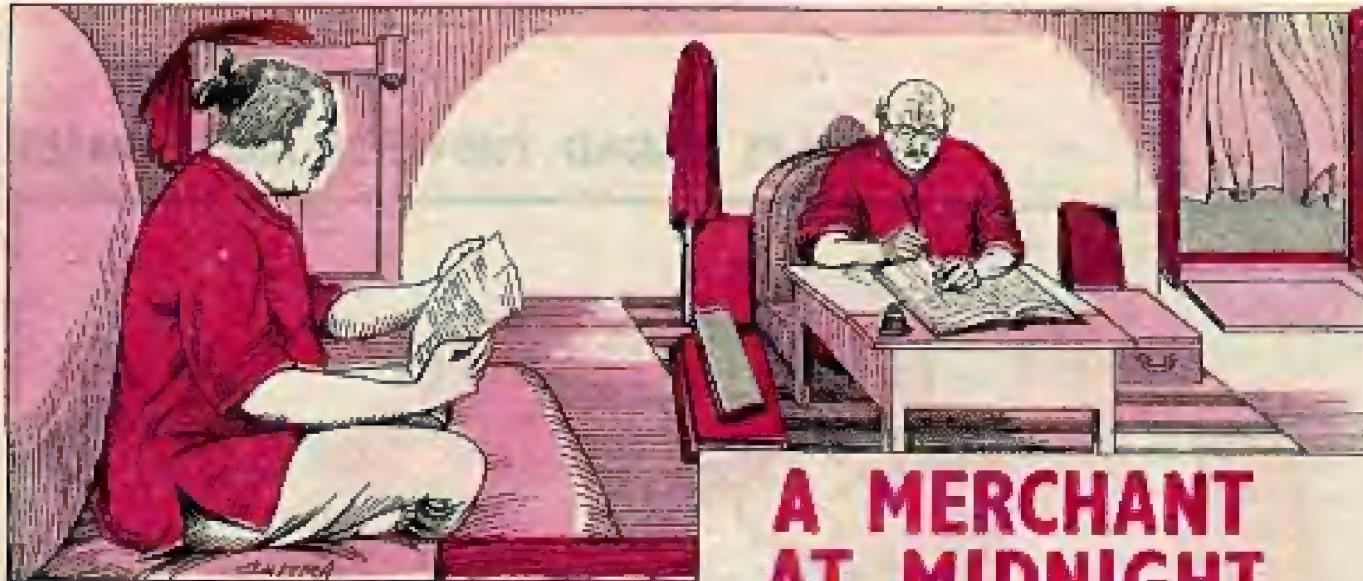
Frankenstein, its maker, pursued it with the intention of destroying it. But he died in the pursuit. The monster then disappeared in the mysterious region.

The term is used today, mistakenly, to mean any invention or discovery which brings or may bring disaster to its maker.

Man has found the ways to master the powers of Nature. But he is not conscientious enough in their use. A thing like the nuclear power, if misused, would no doubt bring a catastrophe for all, including its promoters. Hence it is referred to as Frankenstein.

TALES BEHIND PROVERBS AND PHRASES





A MERCHANT AT MIDNIGHT

Ramshekhar was a clerk in the shop of Haridas, the rich merchant.

Ramshekhar worked hard. He watched and guarded the goods stored in the shop as if they were his own. He rejoiced at his master's prosperity and was gloomy when the business was dull.

When the old Haridas died, his son, Raghu, became the sole owner of the shop. Raghu was suspicious by nature. The sincerity with which Ramshekhar worked aroused this question in his mind: Can an employee feel so much concerned about the welfare of his master?

His own mind provided him with the answer: No. Ramshekhar must be having some other motive. He must be stealing goods from our stock or money from the chest!

Raghu thought further: Ramshekhar has worked in the business for many years. He must have grown clever. It will be impossible to catch him red-handed while he was stealing. The best course should be to dismiss him forthwith.

One afternoon Raghu summoned Ramshekhar and coolly informed him that his services were no more necessary.

For Ramshekhar this was a bolt from the blue. But as he was an extremely good-natured man, he did not murmur. He quietly left the shop.

While Ramshekhar was walking towards his home, he met his old friend, Rajmohan, an accomplished actor.

"What makes you so pensive? Your master's business is down: is that so?" asked Rajmohan.

Ramshekhar burst into tears

and told everything to his dear friend. Rajmohan realised how deeply pained Ramshekhar had been. He knew well both Raghu and Ramshekhar. He consoled his friend saying that he will do his best to mend the situation.

It was a moonlight night. A carriage stopped in front of Raghu's house, adjoining his shop. Raghu heard someone tapping on his door. He opened the door and found a stranger, dressed as a merchant.

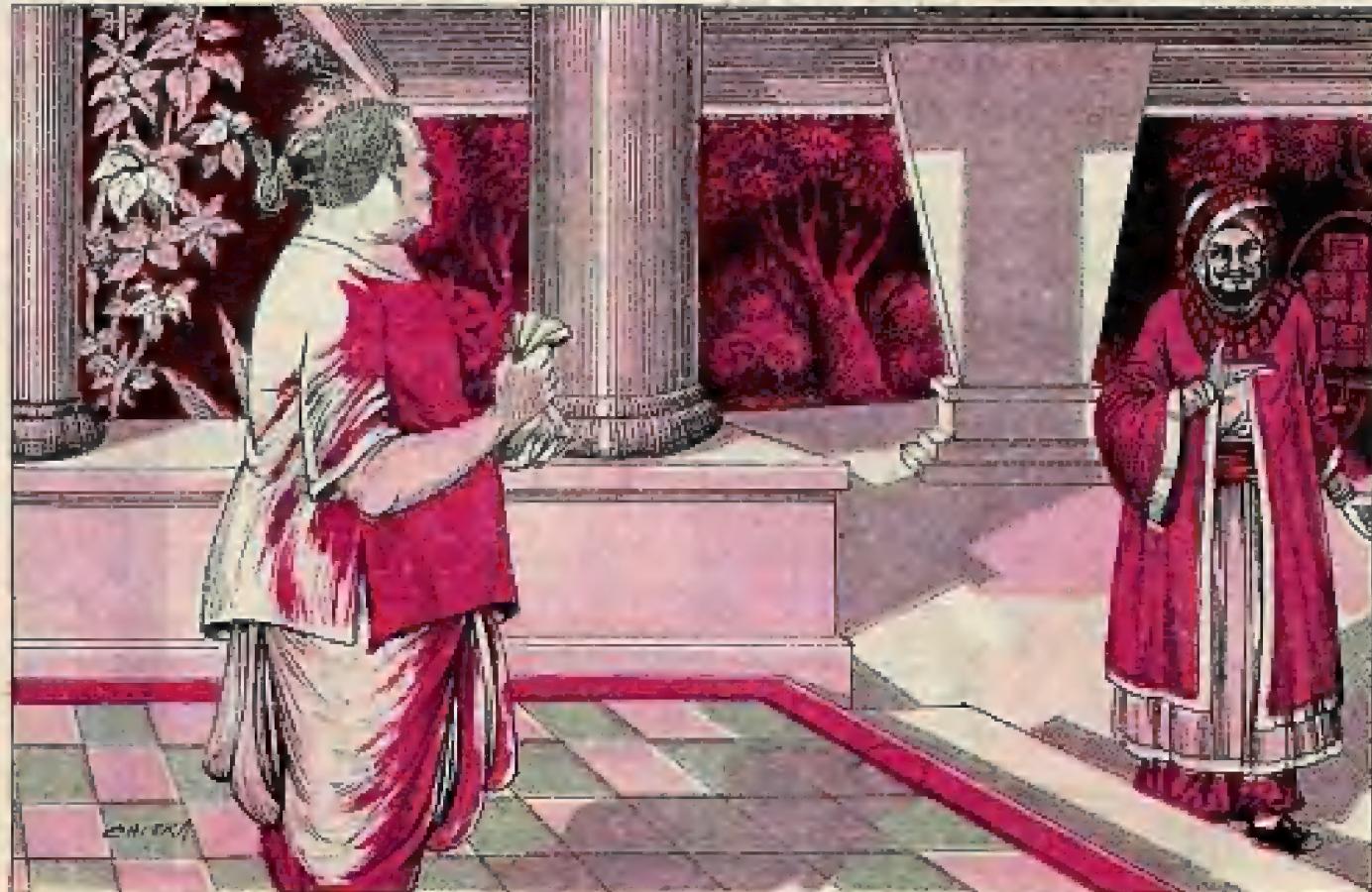
"I hear that you have in your stock certain goods which I need urgently. As you can guess, I come from a faraway land. I have to rush to the port, for,

the ship will leave for my land early in the morning. Here is the list of items I need."

Raghu was pleased to see that the items the stranger needed urgently were available with all him. Since the merchant had so come at an unearthly house, Raghu quoted higher prices for the goods. The merchant protested but was obliged to pay whatever price Raghu demanded as he was in a hurry to go.

The stranger left, loading his carriage with parcels of goods. Raghu retired to bed, joyfully counting the gold coins he had received.

Raghu dreamt some sweet



dreams. But as soon as he woke up in the morning, he started doubting the wisdom of his own bargain, as was his nature.

"I hope, the gold he paid me is genuine!" he told himself and hurried to a goldsmith.

"My dear man, not one of these coins is genuine gold!" observed the goldsmith, "You can throw them into the drain as sportively as you can throw away pebbles."

Raghu suppressed his tears with a good deal of effort and returned home. He sat burying his head between his knees for a long time.

"Are you there, sir?" asked a familiar voice. Raghu raised his head and saw his dismissed clerk, Ramshekhar, standing at the door.

"What is the matter?" demanded Raghu.

"An hour before it was dawn a stranger left some parcels at my door and asked me to hand over this letter to you. The parcels, he informed me, belong to you," said Ramshekhar.

Raghu took the letter. It read, "By this time you should have got a taste of your own talent in business. Take back Ramshekhar if you desire your own survival!"

Raghu stood stunned. Ramshekhar was busy getting the parcels back there. Suddenly Raghu cried out, "Ramshekhar, pardon me. Do not leave me. Please continue to look after the business as you have done all these years."

Ramshekhar was surprised and happy. He went on working as usual.

None of the two ever knew the role played by Rajmohan in reuniting them!





JUICE TURNS GRAPES!

Prince Swarnakumar was the only child of the king of Saptgarh. The royal couple had no issue for a long time. It was after observing several religious rites and giving alms to the poor that they had been blessed with the son.

Naturally, the king and the queen were most indulgent towards the prince. Everything possible had been done to ensure the boy's safe and comfortable growth.

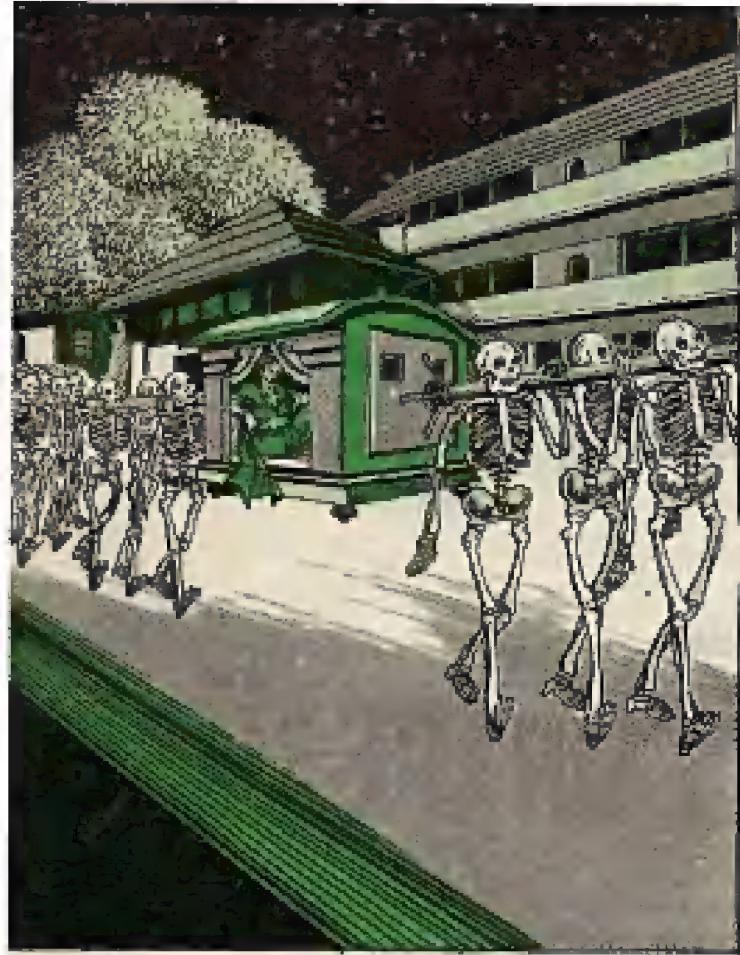
But, as the luck would have it, the prince was stung by a bee while he was enjoying a stroll in the garden. As the prince screamed in pain, the big black bee hovered round him for a moment and then disappeared

into a bush.

A palace maid who attended upon the prince raised an alarm. Several servants came running to the spot, followed by the king and the queen.

However, the court physician applied an ointment on the affected part of the prince's body and that gave him much relief. A dance troupe was immediately called in and its performance kept the prince's attention diverted from his own pain. After that he had his dinner and he went to bed.

At midnight the queen suddenly sat up and woke up the king. She had had an ominous dream which she narrated to the king. In the dream she saw a



sage who told her, "The bee that stung the prince was no ordinary one. Do not rest assured that the prince was out of danger. He will go on losing his weight day after day."

Before the queen could ask the sage how to cure the prince, her sleep terminated.

"Do not give any importance to a dream," said the king. But the queen had no peace of mind. In the morning the first thing she did was to weigh the prince. She noted down the weight. Two days later, on being put on the scale again, the prince was found to have lost some weight.

All the best physicians and exorcists of the kingdom were summoned. But their efforts failed. The prince continued to lose weight. His old spirit of joy also left him.

The king and the queen were in great agony. At last they sent their minister to a *tantrik* who lived in a dense forest. His name was Chandapani. He was famed to have great power over ghosts, ghouls and other spirits.

Chandapani received the minister with kindness and agreed to visit the palace at midnight. But he instructed the minister to see that no human being was seen on the city streets after the nightfall. Secondly, a thousand dishes of delicious food were to be placed in front of the palace.

His instructions were duly carried out. As the legend goes, he visited the palace in the dark night, his palanquin carried by six skeletons, and nearly a thousand skeletons following him.

The skeletons, after doing justice to the thousand dishes spread out before the palace, left the city. Only then the *tantrik* knocked on the palace gate. He was fondly received

by the royalty and their court, who waited inside with throbbing hearts.

Chandapani looked straight into the eyes of the prince and smiled. Then he told the king, "It is exactly as I had suspected. The bee that stung the prince is in fact a witch. Long ago, when I was practising my occult art in a faraway forest, this witch tried to sabotage my work. Furious, it was I who had changed her into a bee and had driven her out of the forest. I had never thought that she will one day harm the prince!"

Chandapani then prepared a fire and threw some dry leaves

into it, all the while uttering *mantras*. The smoke slowly crystallised into a glittering black bee.

"You witch! Why did you sting the innocent prince?" demanded the *tantrik*.

An eerie laughter was heard. Then a voice came from the fire, "It is to draw you here. Will you not free me from your curse? I am longing to get back my lost appearance!"

"You will become your old self again, but not before the prince was cured of his ailment," said the *tantrik* in a voluminous tone.

"Let him drink a glass of





juice squeezed out of the roots of the *Agni* plant. He will completely recover from his sickness," said the eerie voice.

"All right. Go away into your old forest. Your wish will be fulfilled when the prince is cured," said the *tantrik*.

The bee hovered before him, touched his feet, and flew away.

The whole day the *tantrik* performed several rites for the prince's welfare. The people of the city were instructed to remain inside their houses after the nightfall. Again a thousand dishes of food were spread out before the palace. At midnight the battalion of skeletons arrived

and enjoyed the food and departed, carrying the *tantrik* in the palanquin.

Next day, the court physician went into the forest and collected the roots of the *Agni* plant which was not easy to find. The juice was duly squeezed out into a glass. It was black in colour.

But a fresh problem arose when the prince refused to drink the juice. No amount of pleadings, entreaties and persuasions could make him change his mind. Since he saw the black bee, he had grown a strong aversion towards everything black.

When nobody knew what was to be done, Somanath, the court magician, said that he could try to resolve the deadlock. He approached the prince with a glass which seemed to contain some black juice.

"Somanath! I always looked upon you as my friend. You too have joined others in their conspiracy to serve me with poison! I will die if I take that black juice!" shouted the prince.

"My young lord! How can I do anything to displease you? Look at this glass. It contains black juice. But let us see how long it can remain black!" said Somanath. He then raised the

glass and covered it with a black piece of handkerchief. After reciting some *mantras*, he removed the handkerchief. Lo and behold! the glass contained a bunch of grapes! No trace of the black juice was there.

The prince was amused. He relished the grapes.

"You see, my young lord, all that looks black need not be black in reality. The black juice that is offered to you is black only in colour. But it is nectar in quality. Will you not be pleased to take it?" pleaded the magician.

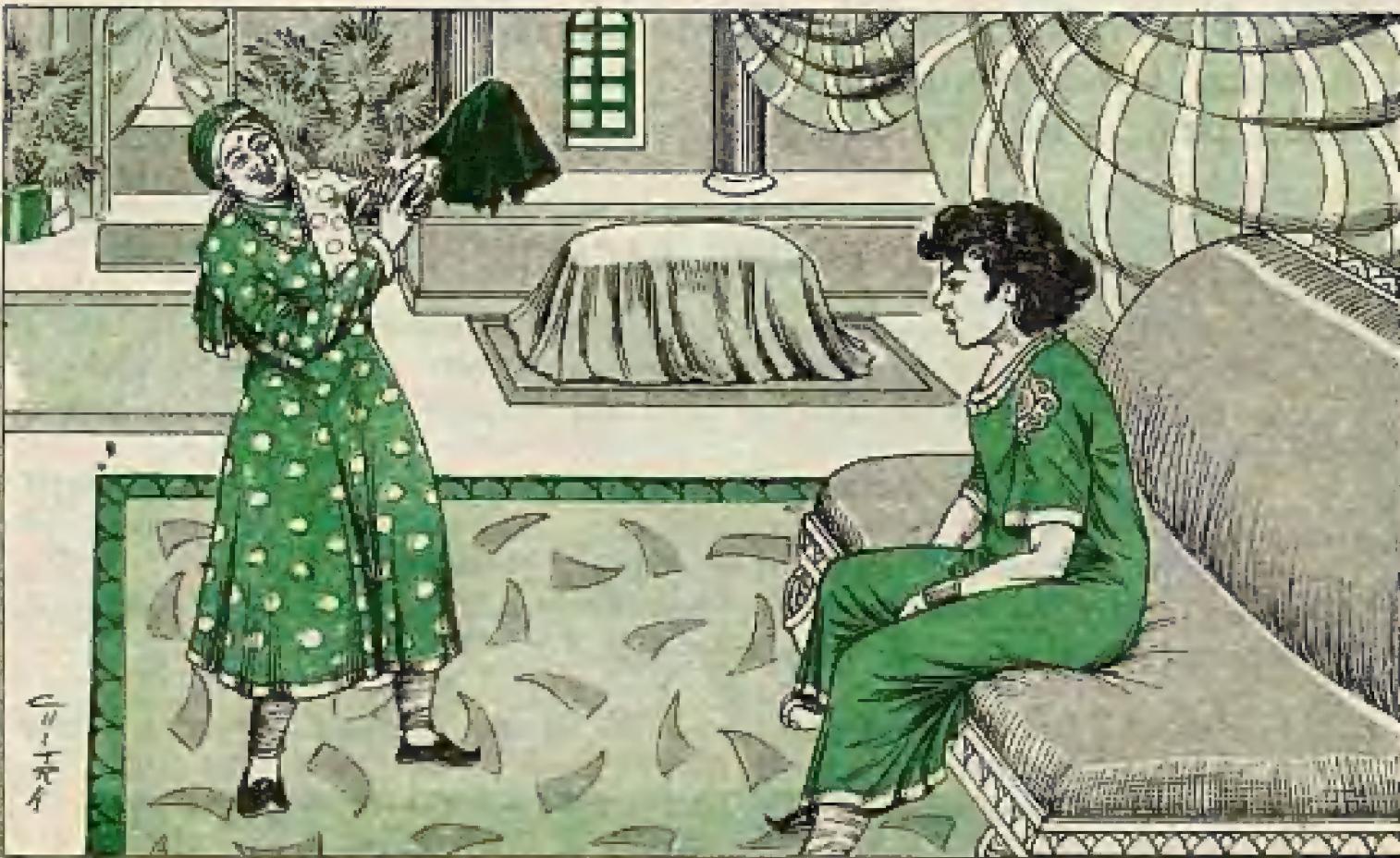
"All right, I will take it for your sake," said the prince and

smiled.

The juice was brought there immediately and the prince drank it up. His face beamed with lustre the very next moment. Nobody was left with any doubt that he was fast recovering from his strange sickness.

The king rewarded the magician with a precious gold necklace. When the magician gave it to his wife, she asked, "But how on earth could the black liquid change into grapes?"

"That the glass contained black liquid was only an illusion. I had smeared the glass with oil. Then I had held it





before an oil lamp. The smoke from the flame, imprinted on the oil base, created the impression that the glass contained a black liquid. I held the glass by its upper portion which was clean. The grape was already inside. Then I covered the glass with a black handkerchief. While I was reciting the so called *mantras*, I was wiping the thin black paste with the handker-

chief. The handkerchief itself being black, it showed no stain. Then I removed the handkerchief. The prince thought that the liquid had been changed into grapes!"

"To my good luck, the grapes have now changed into a precious gold necklace!" said the magician's wife, beaming with joy!

by A. C. SORCER, Magician

MATCHING EACH OTHER

Tom and Dick, after serving for a long time in India under the East India Company, were back in their own country. Both were trying to impress their old friends with the tales of their adventure.

"One day I was bathing in the Ganges. A ferocious Royal Bengal tiger came near the bank fixing his gaze on me. But I gave out such a shout and splashed water at the beast with such fury that it ran away!" said Tom and was happy that he would get greater appreciation from his listeners than Dick ever got.

"What Tom says is true," said Dick, "I was coming that way. I saw the tiger and stroked its whiskers. Indeed, they were wet with the water Tom had splashed!"

THE JACKAL'S DINNER

One morning a hunter entered a forest with a big bow and a good number of arrows. His arrows were meant for killing deer or other weaker creatures. But the hunter, foolish that he was, took aim at a wild boar.

His arrow struck the boar all right, but could not kill it instantly. The wild boar became wilder and charged at him. The hunter tried to climb a tree. But the tree had turned slippery after a rain. He slipped down and fell flat on the ground. The wounded boar rushed at him before he had got up and gored him to death.

But the arrow had its effect on the boar before long. Groaning with pain for a while, the boar lay dead beside the hunter.

This episode took place in a lonely area of the forest which was not frequented by many animals. The man and the beast lay undisturbed for a long time.



Towards the evening, strolling leisurely, a jackal arrived on the spot. Great was his joy when he found the two robust corpses. "What a sumptuous feast awaiting me tonight and for several days to come!" exclaimed the jackal and he sang, "La la la!" and jumped around the corpses till his muscles ached.

"To begin with the man or to begin with the boar—that is the question!" he murmured, but as his eyes fell on the bow, he sang out again, saying, "I've got the answer. To begin with, I need touch neither the man



nor the boar. The string of this arrow is made of animal glands and tissues. That should be enough to satisfy my hunger for the time being. I will begin with the main dishes tomorrow morning."

The jackal then clamped his teeth on the string. The string got snapped. The elastic bow which was bent due to the pull of the string, straightened up at once and one of its sharp ends entered the jackal's mouth with

force. He gave out a sharp cry. Nothing more was heard from him.

The jackal's was the third corpse to lie there.

A little bird who saw the bloody event perched high on a tree, sighed and said, "It is not the bow that killed the jackal, but his own greed. What a pity that he should wish to chew up the dry string while heaps of delicious meat lay at his disposal!"

THE PAINTER'S SKILL

A courtier who thought that he was a fine artist, wanted to please his king by drawing on a canvas the portraits of the king and the queen. The work completed, he carried the canvas to the court and showed it to the king, proudly.

"Who is that funny-looking woman?" asked the king pointing at the queen's portrait.

"It is the queen, my lord!" stammered out the courtier.

"What business had you to place her by the side of that stranger?" shouted the king, pointing at his own portrait.



VEER HANUMAN

At Rama's order, the Vanaras spread into the nearby jungles and brought huge rolls of timber and threw them into the sea. The stouter Vanaras fetched gigantic boulders and rocks and dumped them in the water. Splashes of water rose high. The sea was in a tumult.

Some Vanaras were busy adjusting the stones and timbers in such a way that they were not washed away by the waves. There were others to supervise the work and to see that Nala's directions were properly observed.

The work of the great barrage proceeded uninterrupted. It took only five days to complete it.

Now was the time for the Vanara army to march through the broad path. Vibhishana, along with his four followers, kept a vigilant eye on the path so that the enemy could not attack them while they were unprepared.

Sugriva would not allow Rama and Lakshmana to walk. Hence, Rama was obliged to sit on Hanuman's shoulders, while Lakshmana sat on Angada's. Hanuman and Angada flew for the most part of the way.

The Vanaras began crossing the sea with unbridled enthusiasm and joy. While each one tried to surpass the others in speed, some of them slipped



into the sea from time to time. That was great fun. Their hullabaloo subdued the roar of the sea.

On the other side there were forests abounding in fruits—ideal places for all to take rest. But Rama decided to lead the army as near the city of Lanka as possible. All followed him without a murmur and that pleased him immensely.

As they approached Lanka, they could hear the sound of drums and other musical instruments coming from the city. The Vanaras at once screamed and roared in a bid to surpass the volume of that sound.

"Lakshmana! Look at the

magnificent towers of the city built by Viswakarma on Mount Trikut!" said Rama pointing at the wonderful city at some distance.

It was decided that the Vanaras would be arrayed in the form of a huge eagle, the strategic formation being known as the *Garuda Vyuh*. At the middle of the formation would remain Angada and Neel. Vrishava was to guard the right flank while Gandhamadan was to guard the left. The formation was to be headed by Rama and Lakshmana. Sugriva was to be at the rear.

Rama then asked Sugriva to set free Shuka, Ravana's emissary.

The prisoner Shuka, who had been harassed a lot by the Vanaras on the way, hurried to Ravana's presence.

"Why are you looking so pale? I hope, you had not been captured by the Vanaras!" asked Ravana.

"O king! At your direction I flew down to the other side of the sea and delivered your message to Sugriva. But the Vanaras took me to be a spy instead of an emissary and they made me a prisoner. Queer is the nature of the Vanaras. They

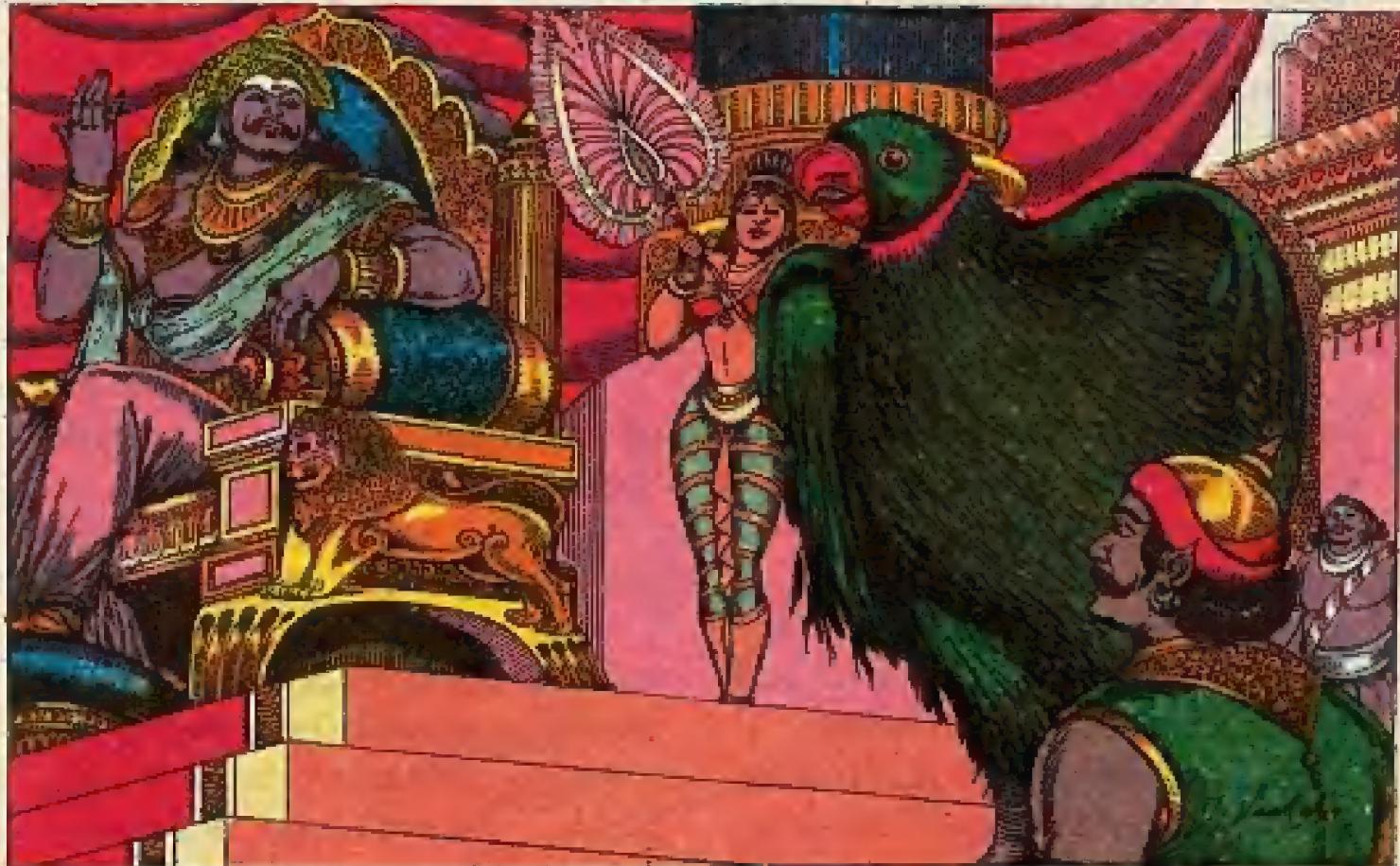
would hardly care for my arguments and pleadings. I had to endure much humiliation during these few days. However, for your information, Rama and his party, with a very big army of Vanaras, have already arrived on the outskirts of our city. There is no time to lose. Surrender Sita Devi to them and avoid a bloody war. Otherwise prepare to face them instantly."

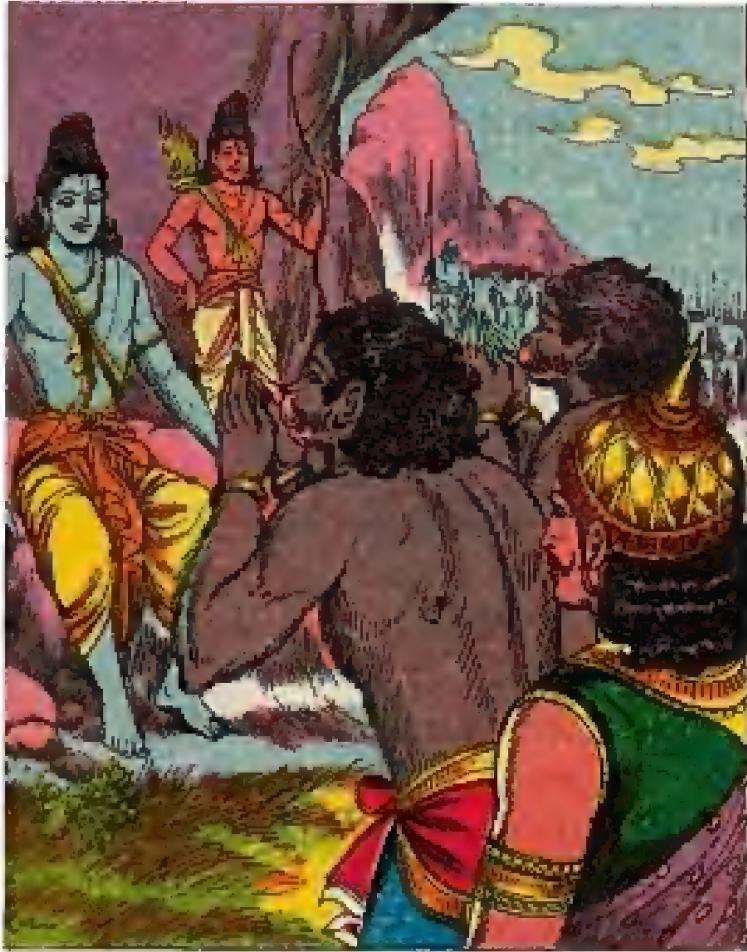
"Surrender Sita to them?" yelled Ravana, "I will not do it even if all the beings of all the planes, the *patala*, the earth and heaven, came to wage a war against me! I have not fought a war since long and am most eager to exercise my muscles

in the battle-field now. Let Rama, who has the least idea of my strength, come to challenge me!"

Ravana then told his ministers, Shuka and Sarana, "It is hard to believe that the Vanaras could bridge the gulf. Go and find out the truth. Count their number and try to know how they succeeded in crossing the sea."

The two ministers assumed the shape of Vanaras and entered Rama's camp. But they were confused about the number of Vanaras. The tail of the huge procession was still crossing the bridge. Battalions of Vanaras loitered on the bank.





Suddenly Vibhishana spied upon the two and captured them. Producing them before Rama, he said, "These two are Ravana's ministers. They were spying over us, disguised as Vanaras."

The two prisoners saluted Rama and confessed to their spying.

"Well, spies, do survey our camp to your satisfaction and return to your master. We will not harm you since you are unarmed," said Rama and he added, "Tell Ravana that the thunder of my wrath will fall on him tomorrow morning."

Hailing Rama, their saviour, the two ministers sped away to

Ravana and reported to him, "Before we could accomplish our task, Vibhishana found us out and led us to Rama's presence. Rama set us free out of his kindness. The huge Vanara army has Rama, Lakshmana, Sugriva and Vibhishana to lead it. What more is necessary for the success of its mission? The impression we have gathered of them prompts us to suggest that Sita Devi should be returned to Rama!"

"You are a coward, not worthy of the race of demons," Ravana shrieked looking at Sarana, "You have become panicky at the mere sight of the Vanaras. But know this that nobody can ever win a victory over me!"

Ravana thereafter became desirous of acquiring a first-hand impression of the enemy camp. He climbed to the top of his palace accompanied by Sarana.

"Point out to me the leaders of the enemy camp," he told Sarana.

Sarana said, pointing his finger at distant figures:

"Neel is the general of the Vanara army. Angada is the crown prince of the kingdom of Vanaras. Hanuman is unique for his strength and braveness.

Nala, who planned the great bridge, is famous for his valour. The battalion he commands has never been defeated in any war. The fair-complexioned Vanara yonder is known as Sveta. He is strong and audacious. The one marked by a red and yellow streaked tail is Kumud, ever eager to wrestle!"

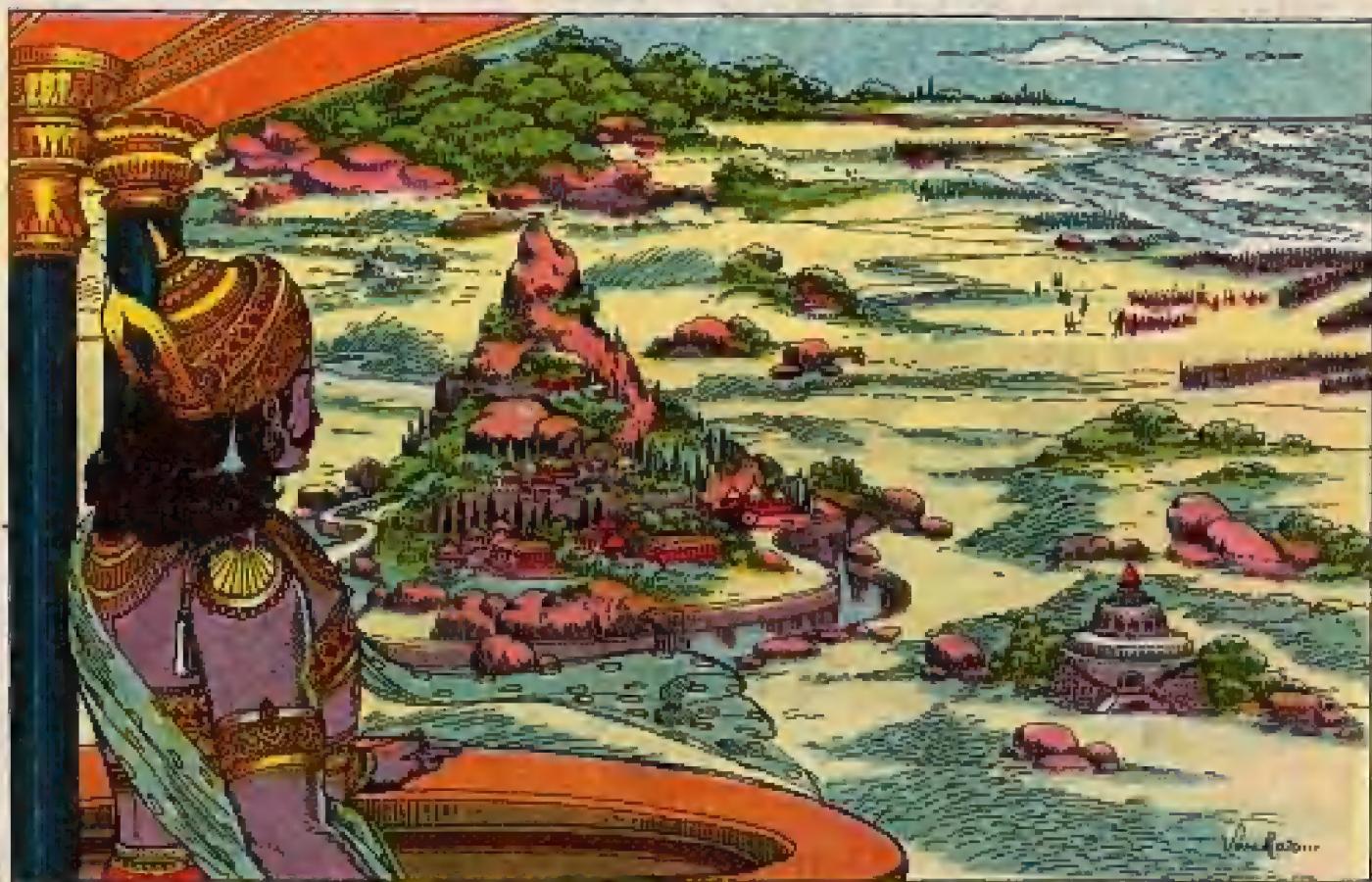
Sarana showed to his master several other Vanara heroes before directing his gaze at the army of bears and their leader, Jamvaban.

Shuka, the other minister, stepped forward and pointed at Rama and Lakshmana who had now come out of the crowd. Beside Rama stood Vibhishana.

For a moment Ravana was overwhelmed with a sense of fear at the sight of his brother. But the fear soon changed into hatred for his ministers who, it appeared to him, were exaggerating the talents of the enemy heroes.

"It is a shame that I have ministers like you. If I will fall into danger, it is on account of you. You have done good to me beforehand. That is why I refrain from punishing you. But get out of my sight!" screamed Ravana.

Ravana called a few of his expert spies and instructed them to go and mingle with the Vanaras and get as much infor-



mation about them as possible.

The spies changed their forms and appeared in Rama's camp around the Subela hill. But they had hardly been there for a moment when their nervous movements attracted Vibhishana's attention. They were captured and taken to Rama. Again Rama took pity on them and released them. But the Vanaras gave them a good beating before allowing them to go away.

Shardula, a demon notorious for his ruthlessness, was the leader of the gang of spies. Ravana was not happy to see Shardula returning so soon. "Have you too failed in your mission?" he asked the spy.

"Yes, my lord. It is not possible to remain in the enemy camp undetected as long as Vibhishana was with them. It

is due to Rama's grace that we have come back alive. The Vanaras would have loved to kill us. But we have no doubt about one thing: An attack on Lanka is imminent. You have either to surrender Sita Devi to Rama or to mobilise the army to defend the city."

"There is no question of surrendering Sita," bellowed Ravana as he dismissed the spies. He then summoned a demon magician named Vidyujjihwa and told him, "Apply your magic art and create a false head which must resemble the head of Rama. Also, prepare a bow like the one used by Rama."

Vidyujjihwa agreed to do the needful and went away with a reward from his master.

Contd.



Two Wise Brothers

A certain hunter once managed to bag a live otter. He put it in a cage and proceeded to the landlord's house. He wished to present the unusual catch to the landlord and hoped to receive a handsome reward.

The landlord was not at home. But his younger brother, a bit tipsy, asked, "What have you brought?"

"An otter, sir," replied the hunter.

"Fine. Pluck a pair of its feathers and give me," ordered the landlord's younger brother.

The hunter left the place without a word more. On his way he met the landlord and reported to him how his younger brother demanded the otter's feathers!

The landlord, who too was tipsy, laughed like a wise man. "My foolish younger brother must have thought that it was a turtle!" commented the worthy elder brother.



The Art of Deception

Ratan fell seriously sick. At his request his friends carried him to the temple where he announced, looking at the deity, "If I recover, I will sell my cow and offer the price obtained to the temple fund!"

He recovered. The villagers reminded him of his promise to the deity. Ratan led his cow to the market, but he also carried a cat along with him.

At the market, he offered to sell the cow at one rupee, but on condition that the customer must buy the cat too which he priced at ninetynine rupees.

He succeeded in selling the two animals and offered the one rupee obtained for the cow to the deity.

While coming out of the temple, he laughed at the thought of having deceived the deity easily. But suddenly the echo of his own laughter aroused fear in himself—he did not know why!





GIFTS FOR GRANNY!

Govind Gupta, a merchant of Gangapur, was well-known for his cleverness. But it was an irony that his son, Shrimant, was a simpleton. Even when he grew old enough to marry, he behaved and talked naively.

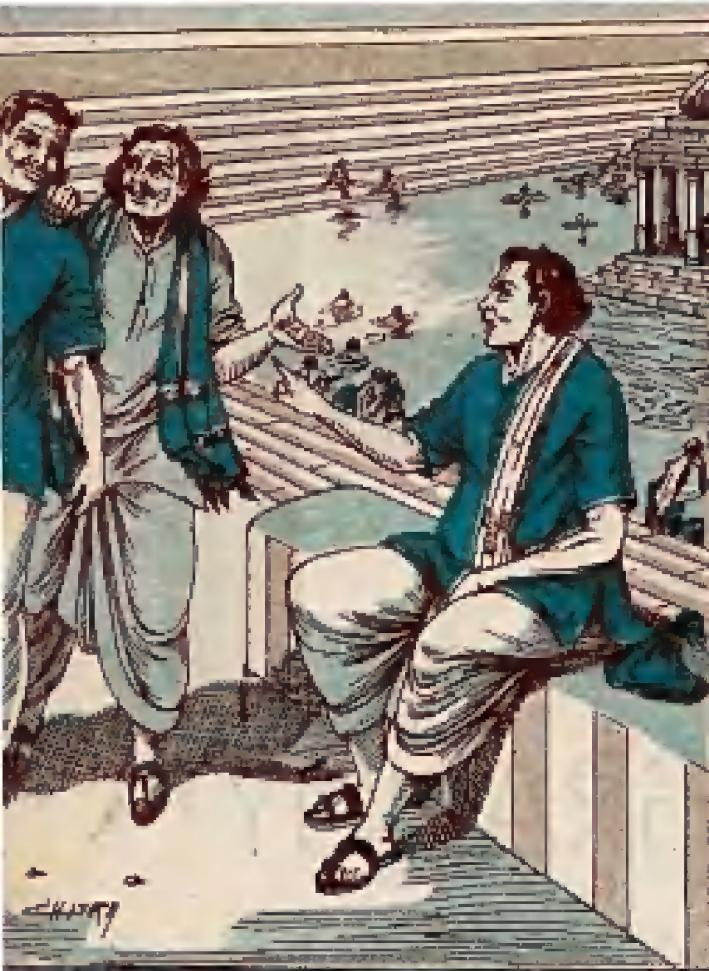
Govind Gupta thought that the best way to make the son sensible was to find a sensible bride for him. Govind was rich and influential. Hence it was not difficult for him to carry out his plan. Shrimant was soon married to a beautiful and clever girl, Lakshmi.

When, after his marriage, Shrimant visited his father-in-law's house, it did not take long for Lakshmi's parents and brothers to read his nature. They

were sad. But Lakshmi told them, "My husband is naive, true. But thank God, he is not wicked."

Shrimant never went out of his house. As it is for a frog in a well, for him too the house was the world. Govind Gupta thought that it would do Shrimant some good if he saw a little of the wide world. He gave the young couple a good deal of money and asked them to go on a pilgrimage. He had great confidence in Lakshmi and he knew that she will guide his son well.

Shrimant heartily enjoyed his travels. New places and great monuments thrilled him. But he never separated from his wife.



He was afraid to do so.

One day, while they passed through a bazar, Shrimant saw excellent grapes being sold in a fruit shop. He told Lakshmi, "My granny loves such grapes very much. I've heard how at times my late grandfather used to walk twelve miles to fetch such grapes from the market. Why not we buy a few bunches of these for her?"

"We will buy on our way back home," replied Lakshmi.

"But must we wait for so many days? Can't we send the grapes for granny through somebody?" asked Shrimant like a clever man.

"We can, provided we meet someone of our area who was on his homeward journey," replied Lakshmi.

An hour later Lakshmi was bathing in a pond while Shrimant sat near the road waiting for her. He saw two fellows passing by. In his enthusiasm to appear clever, he asked them, "Don't you belong to Gangapur or some nearby village?"

The two fellows looked at each other meaningfully. One of them said, "You are right. So what?"

"Well, I'm Govind Gupta's son!" Shrimant said smiling.

"Are you? How nice! Had I not made the right guess?" said one fellow to the other.

"All I want is to send some grapes for my granny. Will you mind carrying them?" Shrimant asked.

"We will be delighted to carry them," said the two, "Hurry up. Give us the fruits."

Shrimant rushed to the shop and bought grapes worth twenty rupees and entrusted the two men with them and said, "I will never forget your kindness!"

The two strangers left the place as soon as they could.

Shrimant duly reported to

Lakshmi what he had done. Lakshmi of course tried to convince him that he had been cheated. But she did not succeed.

The two fellows became eager to exploit the naive Shrimant further. They followed the couple to the next town. The couple found shelter in a choultry. Their pursuers managed to have a room for themselves in the same choultry.

Once when Shrimant came out of his room alone, they approached him and greeted him as if they were his old friends.

"When did you return from

Gangapur?" asked Shrimant eagerly.

"We have just returned. Your granny was very happy to receive the grapes. Your father was pleased to learn from us that you are happy and healthy. But your granny asked us to inform you that she desires to have a plate and a drinking vessel made of silver. You may please arrange to buy and send the utensils through someone," said the fellows.

"When do you propose to go back to Gangapur?" asked Shrimant.

"We are leaving today. But you may send the utensils





through some other people," said the fellows, pretending unwillingness to carry the things.

"My friends, I will buy the utensils right now. Where can I get good people like you?" said Shrimant and he entered his room and came out with his purse. Lakshmi was asleep.

They went to a shop where a variety of silver wares were available. Shrimant chose a plate and a drinking vessel made of quality silver and handed over them to the strangers.

Lakshmi had woken up when Shrimant returned to the choultry. Shrimant told her, "You

thought that those gentlemen through whom I sent the grapes were cheats. Now, they met me on their return from Gangapur and informed me how happy my granny was with my gift. How could the granny be happy if she did not receive the grapes?"

Shrimant then recounted how he sent the silver utensils through the same fellows. Lakshmi opened the purse and was shocked to see three hundred rupees gone. But this time she did not give out her reaction. Instead, she said, "Those gentlemen deserve to be thanked and entertained. If you see them again, bring them here."

The cheats had grown even more eager to obtain some further benefits from Shrimant. Two days later they met Shrimant again. Shrimant did not let them go, but guided them into his room and introduced them to Lakshmi.

"It has been very kind of you to carry things for our granny. It is so difficult to find friends like you while away from home!" said Lakshmi and she would not let them go before they had been entertained to some food.

Suddenly an old couple entered the room. Lakshmi

showed surprise and joy and bowed to them. After the old man was seated, Lakshmi asked the stranger, "By the by, how is my father-in-law?"

"He is doing fine," said one of the cheats.

"But is it not surprising that you don't recognise him while he remains seated before you?" Lakshmi asked in a stern voice.

The cheats looked pale. They got up hurriedly and tried to escape. But, to their horror, they saw four young men guarding the door, stout sticks in their hands.

It was only then that Shrimant realised his blunder. He lost

no time in picking up a stick himself and giving a blow each to the two fellows.

One of the cheats was detained there, till the other one, accompanied by three young men, went and returned with the silver utensils.

Needless to say, Lakshmi had arranged for this little drama by the help of the pilgrims who were living in the same choultry. The old couple who acted as Shrimant's parents advised him, "Sonny! Never do anything without your wife's knowledge!"

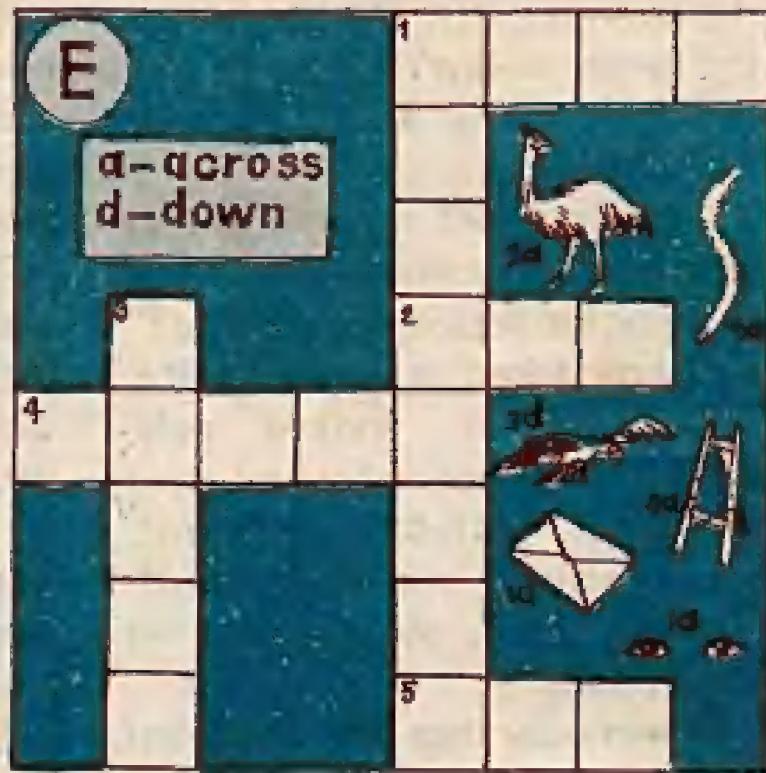
Shrimant had grown wise enough to accept the advice.



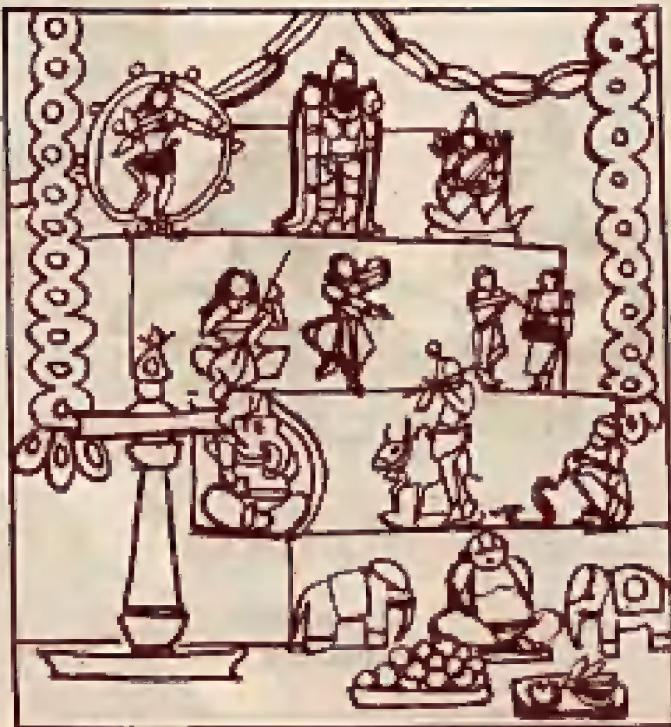
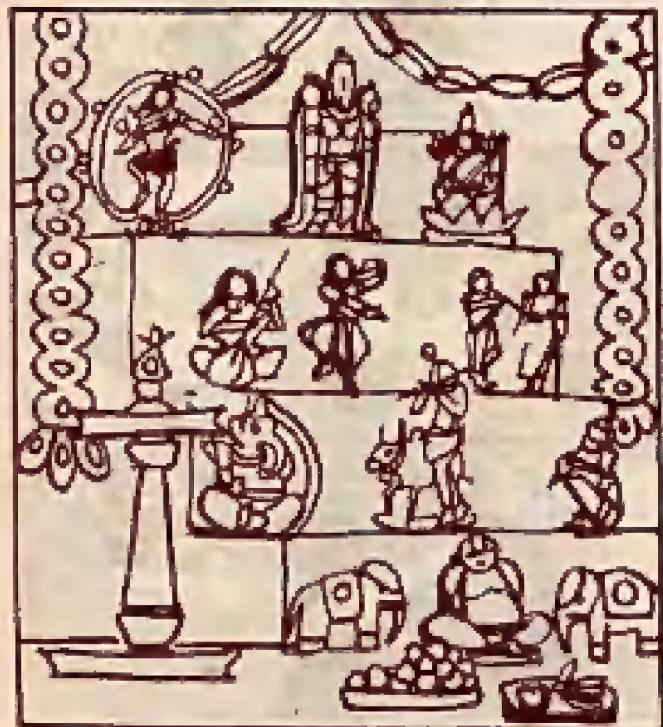
PUZZLE TIME

In this month's crossword all the answers begin with the letter "E". Can you complete the puzzle by writing in the names of all the small pictures?

ANSWERS
1A Eyes; 2A Emu;
3A Easel; 5A Eagle
1D Envelope;
4A Easel; 5A Eagle
3D Eagle



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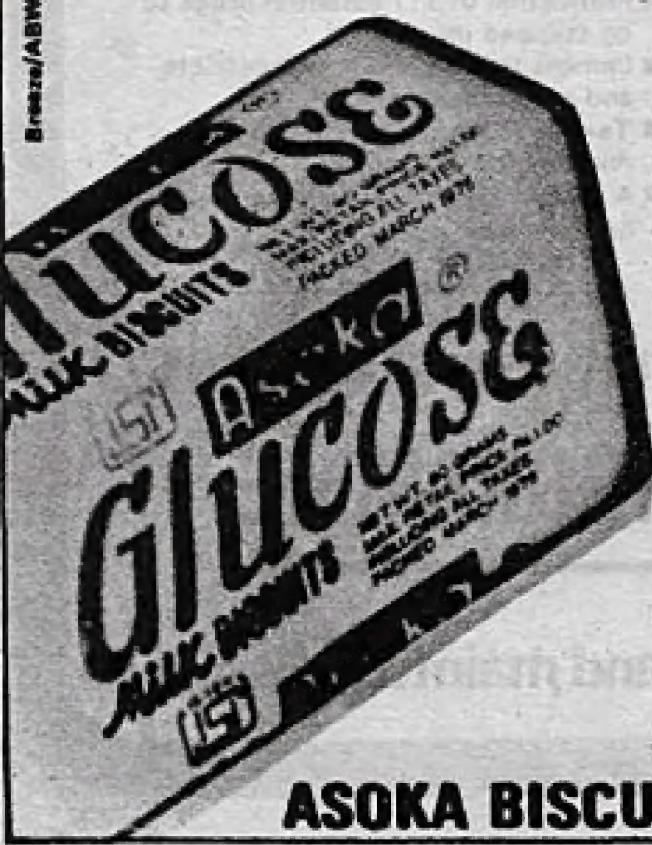
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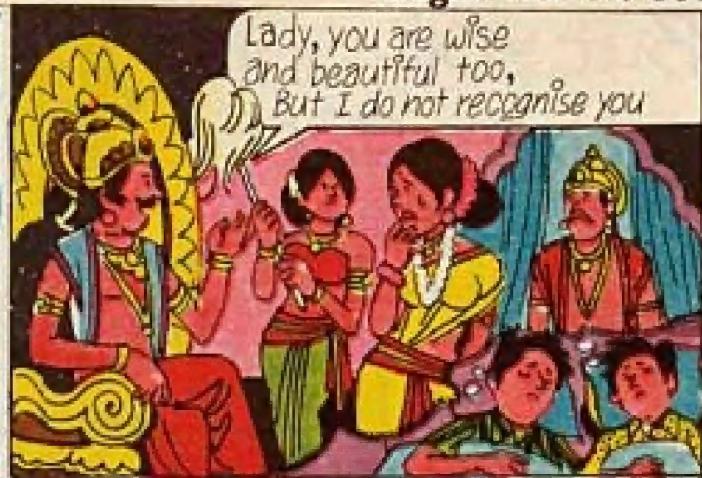
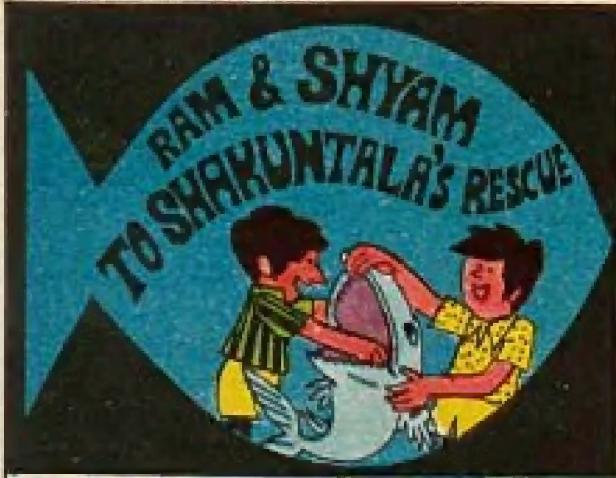
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